

**RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM'S "BAN THE BOX"
POLICY**

WHEREAS, in the early 2000s, grassroots organizers in San Francisco and Boston began urging local governments to remove questions about convictions from job applications so that applicants could be judged first on their qualifications; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Winston-Salem also recognized the importance of eliminating barriers to employment for citizens with criminal histories and providing them with avenues to gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of this critical need in our community, the Mayor and City Council adopted the policy of "banning the box" on applications for all City jobs, making the City of Winston-Salem one among more than 150 local jurisdictions nationwide that have adopted such policies to-date; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of the goal of assisting returning citizens in their transition back to society and making gainful employment opportunities available to them, the Mayor and City Council supported the creation of the Successful Outcomes After Release (S.O.A.R) initiative in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the S.O.A.R initiative provides grants to support the work of organizations that provide educational, vocational, therapeutic, and employment training programs to the local returning citizen community; and

WHEREAS, the S.O.A.R initiative also provides funding for the City to supplement its existing work force in areas of critical need by hiring between 8 and 16 returning citizens annually in temporary capacities; and

WHEREAS, more than three dozen citizens with criminal histories have been afforded opportunities for gainful employment by virtue of the program, many of whom have secured full-time employment with the City of Winston-Salem or with other organizations as result of their hard work and dedication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Winston-Salem reaffirm their support for the City’s policy of “banning the box” and express support for the exploration of additional measures that the City can adopt to further its support for second chance employment opportunities for local returning citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Winston-Salem that other local employers be encouraged to join the City in its efforts to provide paths to gainful employment for returning citizens.

ADOPTED this 20th day of November, 2017.